

Testimony
of
Brenden Boudreau
Director of Field and Political Operations
National Association for Gun Rights
May 16th, 2017

Chairman Runestad and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to publicly address House Bills 4416-4419

My name is Brenden Boudreau, and I am the Director of Field and Political Operations at the National Association for Gun Rights, a member supported organization with over 75,000 active members and supporters in the state of Michigan.

Today, the committee will hear comments on this legislation which is commonly referred to as Constitutional Carry in many states around the country.

On behalf of the National Association for Gun Rights and our members in Michigan, as well as our state affiliate Great Lakes Gun Rights, I speak in support of House Bills 4416-4419, but would also encourage the committee to further improve this legislation with recommendations that I will cover later in my testimony.

First, I'd like to discuss the concept of Constitutional Carry

At the heart of these measures is the idea that our Second Amendment rights and the rights protected in Article I, Section 6 of the Michigan Constitution, along with our right to self-defense, should not be subject to the whims of the state.

The concept of a Constitutional Carry legislation is quite simple.

Constitutional Carry laws recognize the right of every law-abiding citizen to carry a firearm, openly or concealed, on their person without having to receive government permission in the form of a mandatory state or county issued permit.

Unlicensed open carry is already legal in Michigan and forcing law abiding citizens to purchase a concealed pistol license amounts to little more than a coat tax on covering up your firearm in public.

By rendering the concealed carry permit optional within the state of Michigan, this state will be joining the likes of Arizona, Alaska, Wyoming, West Virginia, Kansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Idaho, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, and most recently, North Dakota.

The National Association for Gun Rights has fought hard to pass Constitutional Carry across the country, and we will continue until Michigan is added to this list.

Critics that pan Constitutional Carry often argue that “wild west” shootouts will spill out into the streets, simply because the concealed carry permit is rendered optional.

Yet there is no evidence for this, in fact, all evidence points in the opposite direction of this outrageous claim.

According to FBI Crime Statistics, states which have passed Constitutional Carry into law have both lower violent rates and lower murder rates by firearm than non-Constitutional Carry states.

The same holds true with arguments regarding officer safety.

While we proudly support law enforcement, the common claim that Constitutional Carry will put officers at risk has not been seen in any Constitutional Carry state.

In fact, evidence points to the contrary.

Law-abiding citizens who are allowed to carry their firearm openly or concealed, without government intrusion, reduce crime.

Plain and simple.

And if Michigan passes Constitutional Carry it will also be recognizing another fundamental truth.

The choice to wear a shirt or coat, while in public, over your legally owned firearm should not require government fees and licensing.

Licenses should be optional for reciprocity purposes.

To be clear, Constitutional Carry is a very simple concept.

It doesn't allow anyone to carry a weapon that cannot legally possess one.

Criminals will not suddenly be able to legally carry a gun. Those barred under the law from legally owning or carrying a gun will still be barred under these measures.

The argument that criminals will suddenly be emboldened to illegally carry guns because of Constitutional Carry is laughable, and there is no statistical evidence to back up these claims.

This bill does nothing more than restore law-abiding gun owners' ability to carry a lawfully possessed concealed firearm on their person, while in public, without having to pay a government fee to do so.

To improve this bill package, I encourage the committee to amend this legislation so that CPL holders and those who would be carrying under the new Constitutional Carry law would have equal rights as to where they are allowed to carry.

HB 4565 and 4568 in the bill package being led by Rep. Gary Glenn do a good job of bringing more equality between CPL holders and non-CPL holders.

Also, I encourage the committee to clean up 28.422 as HB 4568 does to make it clear that the permit to purchase is not required to carry, possess or transport a firearm in the State of Michigan, as this is not currently addressed in HB 4416-HB 4419 and remains as an added requirement for someone who is otherwise legal to carry under the proposed legislation.

Thank you.



NRA
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

GET THE FACTS PERMITLESS CARRY

Fact: More than half of U.S. states (31) have allowed permitless open carry throughout the 20th and 21st Centuries. Permitless carry bills backed by the NRA simply recognizes that it is often more convenient and socially acceptable to carry discretely in today's society.

Fact: Twelve states – Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Vermont, West Virginia, Wyoming, New Hampshire, and Montana – already allow law-abiding individuals to carry a concealed handgun without a government-issued permit. (Montana allows Permitless Carry for all areas outside city limits – 99.4% of the state.)

Fact: Permitless Carry simply allows a person who is otherwise legally able to possess and carry a firearm to do so in a discrete, concealed manner.

Fact: Permitless Carry does not change prohibited person laws or any law governing the misuse of a firearm (illegal brandishing, discharge, threatening, etc.), prohibited places where a firearm cannot be carried, or when force may be used in defense of self or others.

Fact: Private property owners still maintain discretion over their own property, including whether and on what terms to allow firearms.

Fact: Criminals already carry concealed firearms without regard for the law. Permitless carry legislation backed by the NRA isn't for them. Permitless Carry simply puts the law-abiding on equal footing.

Fact: Permitless Carry helps law-abiding people avoid being targeted by criminals seeking to steal guns or neutralize any source of resistance at the scene of a crime.

Fact: Permitless Carry gives criminals a reason to fear that any potential victim could be armed and disincentivizes criminal conduct.

Fact: States that adopt Permitless Carry laws, still retain their concealed carry permitting process for gun owners who wish to take advantage of concealed carry reciprocity with other states, NICS exemption, and carrying in federal school zones.

Fact: Permitless Carry ensures the privacy of those who exercise their Second Amendment rights and prevents incidents where permit holder information has been leaked or published maliciously.

Fact: States that adopt Permitless Carry laws have not seen a drop in the number of concealed carry permits issued. According to a December 2016 article in the Idaho State Journal, “Despite the implementation of Idaho’s Permitless Carry law this past July, the number of Idahoans obtaining concealed weapons permits has remained steady.” At least one key reason for this is the benefit of concealed carry license reciprocity for those travelling out-of-state.

The history of Permitless Carry laws in the U.S.

- **Vermont** has had Permitless Carry since the nation's founding in 1791 and has never enacted a law banning the right to discreetly bear arms.
- **Montana** enacted Permitless Carry in 1991 for all areas outside city limits (99.4% of the state).
- **Alaska** enacted Permitless Carry on June 11, 2003.
- **Arizona** enacted Permitless Carry on April 16, 2010.
- **Wyoming** enacted Permitless Carry for residents in 2011.
- **Kansas** enacted Permitless Carry on April 2, 2015
- **Maine** enacted Permitless Carry on July 8, 2015.
- **Idaho** enacted Permitless Carry for residents on March 25, 2016.
- **West Virginia** enacted Permitless Carry on March 4, 2016.
- **Mississippi** enacted Permitless Carry on April 15, 2016.
- **Missouri** enacted Permitless Carry on September 14, 2016 (effective January 1, 2017).
- **New Hampshire** enacted Permitless Carry on February 22, 2017.

States that Enact Permitless Carry do not devolve into the Wild West.

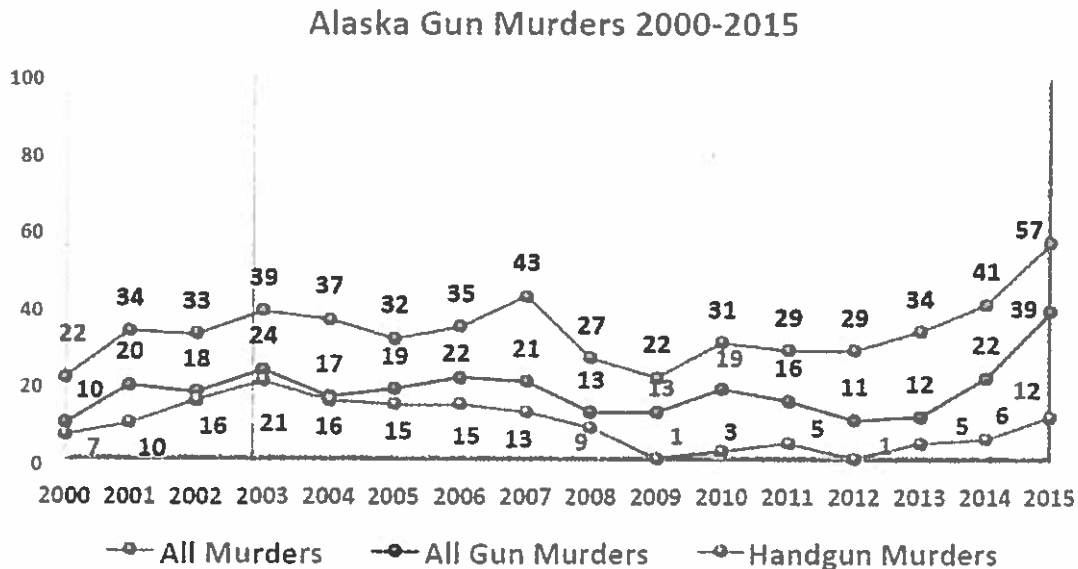
To examine the impact of Permitless Carry, we selected those states that have enacted a relevant law and for which sufficient public data is available for both the pre- and post-law periods. Three states that meet both requirements: Alaska, Arizona, and Wyoming.

Vermont has always had Permitless Carry and Montana’s law is not statewide. Other states enacted Permitless Carry laws too recently to allow a comparison of murder statistics before and after the law took effect.

Using data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s annual “Crime in the United States Report,” our analysis focuses on the number of murders, including both those committed with a firearm and those committed with a handgun, in the states of Alaska, Arizona, and Wyoming.

Based on our analysis, it is clear that none of the three states with sufficient available data experienced an increase in the number of murders, including handgun murders, after enacting Permitless Carry. Data for each state is presented on the following pages.

Alaska
Permitless Carry Enacted June 11, 2003
Comparison of Murders before and after Permitless Carry

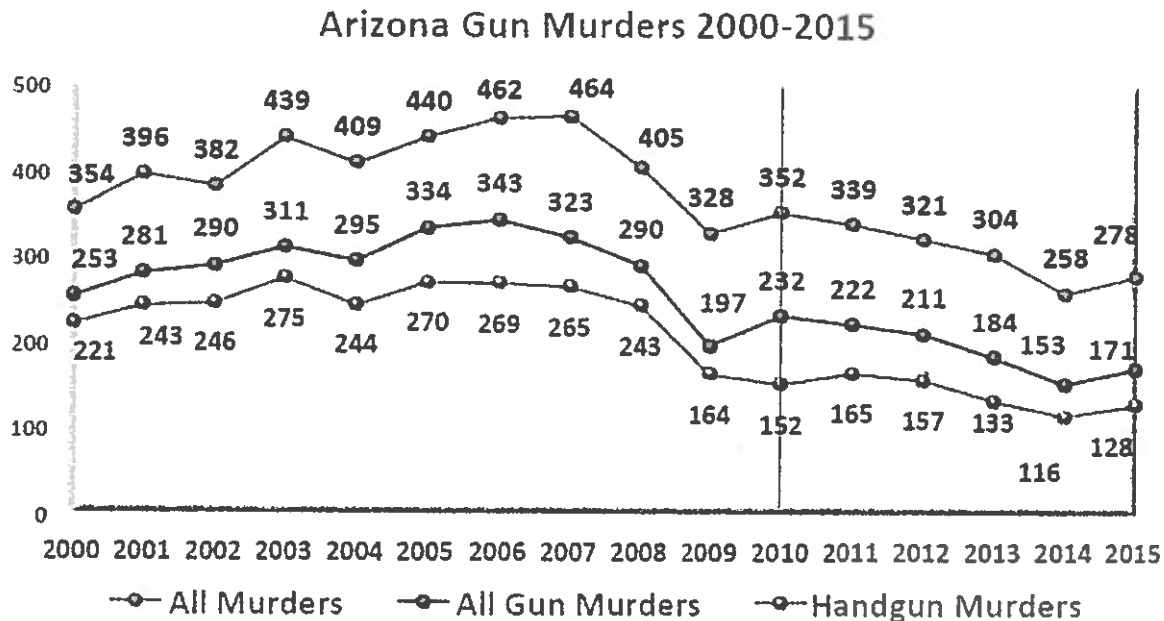


After Alaska adopted Permitless Carry in 2003, there was no spike in the number of murders, including those committed with guns – and with handguns explicitly.

- Handgun murders declined after 2003 and declined faster than the overall number of murders in Alaska.
- Handguns have declined as a percentage of all murders in the years since Permitless Carry took effect.
- As the number of murders increased in 2014 and 2015, handguns murders remained comparatively low. The percent of all murders committed with handguns in these years did not rise as quickly as the percent of all murders committed with any type of firearm.
- As the total number of murders hit a high point (at that time) in 2007, the number of handgun murders actually slightly declined from the previous years.

Source: FBI "Crime in the United States Report", 2000-2015. Table 20: Murder by State, Type of Weapon. Accessed 11 January 2017. FBI reports based on supplemental homicide data.

Arizona
Permitless Carry Enacted April 16, 2010
Comparison of Murders before and after Permitless Carry



After Arizona adopted Permitless Carry in 2010, there was no increase in the number of murders, including those committed with guns – including handguns explicitly.

- The downward trend of murders continued after Permitless Carry.
- The percent of murders committed with a handgun decreased after Permitless Carry took effect (from an average of 60% per year before Permitless Carry to less than 50% in the Permitless Carry years).
- The percentage of murders that were committed with a gun of any type declined after Permitless Carry.
- Even as the number of murders rebounded from 2009-2010, the percentage that were committed with handgun did not return to previous levels (on average, 60% before and 46% after Permitless Carry).

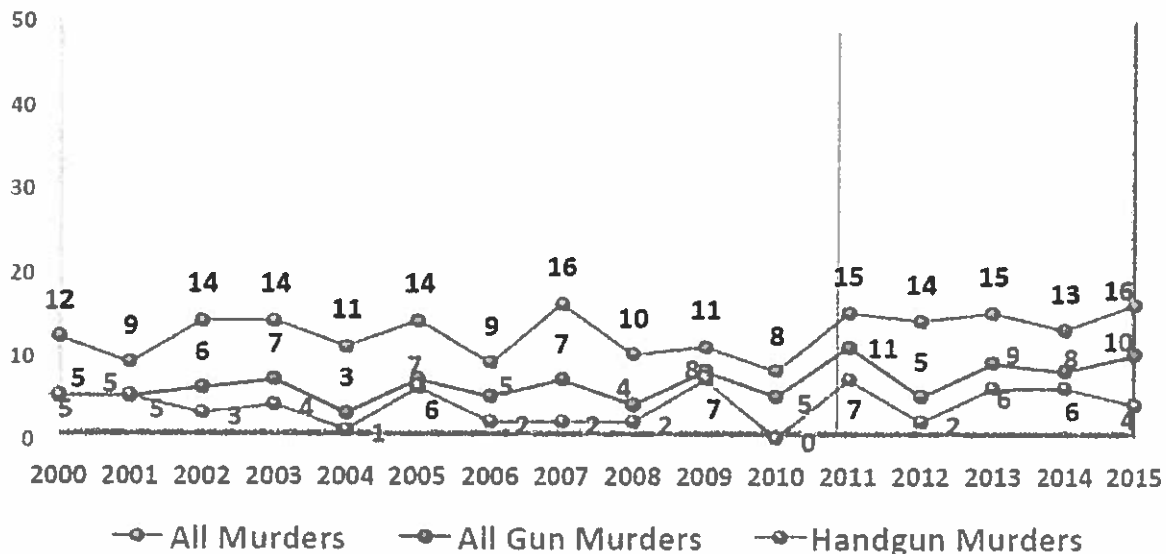
Source: FBI "Crime in the United States Report", 2000-2015. Table 20: Murder by State, Type of Weapon. Accessed 11 January 2017. FBI reports based on supplemental homicide data.

Wyoming

Permitless Carry Enacted for Residents March 2, 2011

Comparison of Murders before and after Permitless Carry

Wyoming Gun Murders 2000-2015



Wyoming has historically had few murders and that trend continued after Permitless Carry took effect in 2011.

- Without drawing inferences from this limited number of cases, the data indicates that the number of murders committed with handguns held at or near the same level both before and after Permitless Carry became law.
- The increase in murders, including handgun and all firearm murders, in 2011 should not be attributed directly to Permitless Carry; the law took effect in July. This analysis is focused on examining the number of murders before and after the state law. External factors that may contribute to crime have not been controlled for in this analysis.

Source: FBI "Crime in the United States Report", 2000-2015. Table 20: Murder by State, Type of Weapon. Accessed 11 January 2017. FBI reports based on supplemental homicide data.

FBI Definitions and Data

Murder and non-negligent manslaughter are defined as the willful killing of one human being by another. The data used in the FBI's aggregation, and in our analysis, is from all law enforcement agencies that submitted supplemental homicide data for the years under examination, and the weapon totals are aggregated from all murders for which the FBI received supplemental homicide data. The "All Gun Murders" data includes homicides and non-negligent manslaughter committed with any of the categories of firearms included in the Uniform Crime Report: handguns, rifles, shotguns, and "type unknown." Data pulled from FBI "Crime in the United States Report," 2000-2015. Table 20.



NRA
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

GET THE FACTS

Permitless Carry Does Not Increase the Number of Law Enforcement Officers Killed

The National Rifle Association used data from the FBI's annual "Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted" report to analyze the impact of Permitless Carry laws on the number of law enforcement personnel feloniously killed with a handgun.

The history of Permitless Carry laws in the U.S. is as follows:

- Vermont has had Permitless Carry since the nation's founding in 1791 and has never enacted a law banning the right to discreetly bear arms.
- Montana enacted Permitless Carry in 1991 for all areas outside city limits (99.4% of the state).
- Alaska enacted Permitless Carry on June 11, 2003.
- Arizona enacted Permitless Carry on April 16, 2010.
- Wyoming enacted Permitless Carry for residents in 2011.
- Kansas enacted Permitless Carry on April 2, 2015.
- Maine enacted Permitless Carry on July 8, 2015.
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- Mississippi enacted Permitless Carry on April 15, 2016.
- Missouri enacted Permitless Carry on September 14, 2016 (effective January 1, 2017).
- New Hampshire enacted Permitless Carry on February 22, 2017.

From these states, we selected those with sufficient public data available for the periods before and after the law went into effect. These states are Alaska, Arizona, and Wyoming.

Vermont has always had Permitless Carry and Montana's law is not statewide. Other states enacted Permitless Carry laws too recently to allow an analysis of the impact on felonious killings of law enforcement personnel.

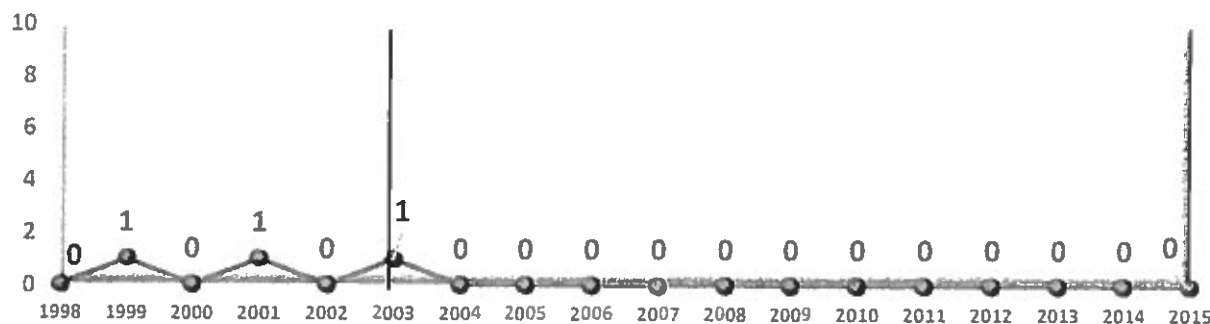
Based on our analysis, none of the three states with sufficient available data have experienced an increase in the number of felonious killings of law enforcement personnel committed with a handgun after Permitless Carry took effect.

Alaska

Permitless Carry enacted in 2003

- Between 1998 and 2015, ten members law enforcement community have been lost to felonious killings; three were killed with a handgun.

Alaska: Felonious Killings of LEO with a Handgun 1998 - 2015



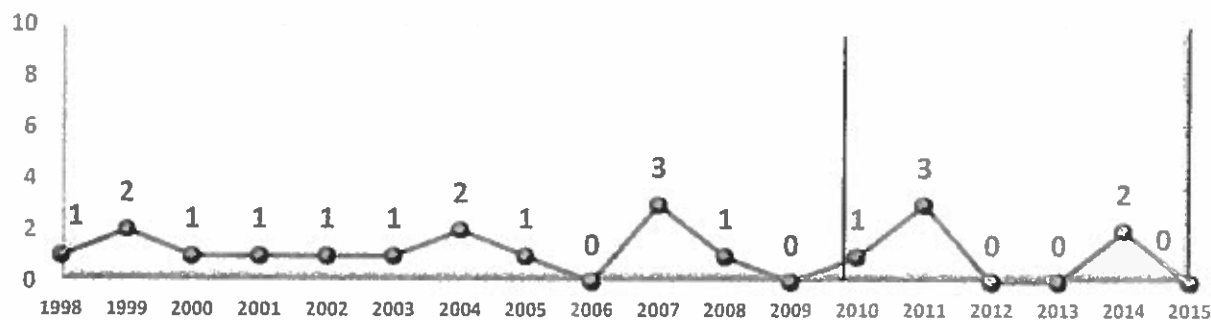
- None occurred in the years after Permitless Carry became law.

Arizona

Permitless Carry enacted in 2010

- Thirty law enforcement officers were feloniously killed between 1998 and 2015. Twenty were killed with a handgun.
- The average number of law enforcement officers feloniously killed by a handgun is the same (one) in the five-year period before Permitless Carry as in the five years following.

Arizona: Felonious Killings of LEO with a Handgun 1998 - 2015

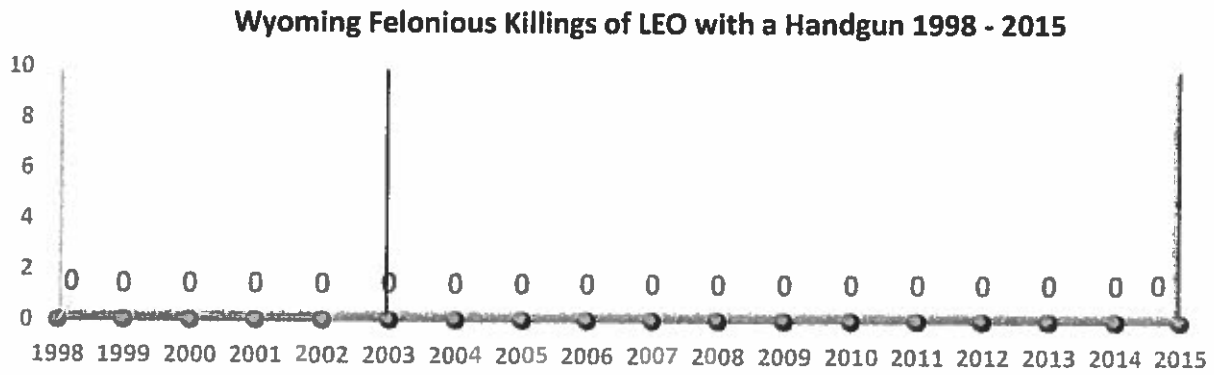


Source: FBI Annual "Law Enforcement Officers Killed & Assaulted" reports

Wyoming

Permitless Carry enacted for residents in 2011

- Since 1998, there have been zero felonious killings of law enforcement personnel.



Source: FBI Annual "Law Enforcement Officers Killed & Assaulted" reports



ALL INJURIES

Principal Types of Unintentional-Injury-Related Deaths (cont.)

Principal types of unintentional-injury-related deaths, United States, 1903-1998 (cont.)

Year	Total	Motor vehicle	Falls	Drowning ^a	Fire, flames, or smoke ^b	Choking ^c	Firearms	Poison (solid or liquid)	Poison (gas or vapor)	All other
1974	104,822	46,402	16,339	7,876	6,236	2,991	2,513	4,016	1,518	16,731
1975	103,030	45,853	14,896	8,000	6,071	3,106	2,380	4,694	1,577	16,453
1976	100,761	47,038	14,136	6,827	6,338	3,033	2,059	4,161	1,569	15,600
1977	103,202	49,510	13,773	7,126	6,357	3,037	1,982	3,374	1,596	16,447
1978	105,561	52,411	13,690	7,026	6,163	3,063	1,806	3,035	1,737	16,630
1979	105,312	53,524	13,216	6,872	5,991	3,243	2,004	3,165	1,472	15,825
1980	105,718	53,172	13,294	7,257	5,822	3,249	1,955	3,089	1,242	16,638
1981	100,704	51,385	12,628	6,277	5,697	3,331	1,871	3,243	1,280	14,992
1982	94,082	45,779	12,077	6,351	5,210	3,254	1,756	3,474	1,259	14,922
1983	92,488	44,452	12,024	6,353	5,028	3,387	1,695	3,382	1,251	14,916
1984	92,911	46,263	11,937	5,388	5,010	3,541	1,668	3,808	1,103	14,193
1985	93,457	45,901	12,001	5,316	4,938	3,551	1,649	4,091	1,079	14,931
1986	95,277	47,865	11,444	5,700	4,835	3,692	1,452	4,731	1,009	14,549
1987	95,020	48,290	11,733	5,100	4,710	3,688	1,440	4,415	900	14,744
1988	97,100	49,078	12,096	4,966	4,965	3,805	1,501	5,353	873	14,463
1989	95,028	47,575	12,151	4,015	4,716	3,578	1,489	5,603	921	14,980
1990	91,983	46,814	12,313	4,885	4,175	3,303	1,416	5,055	748	13,474
1991	89,347	43,536	12,662	4,818	4,120	3,240	1,441	5,698	736	13,096
1992	86,777	40,982	12,646	3,542	3,958	3,182	1,409	6,449	633	13,976
1993	90,523	41,893	13,141	3,807	3,900	3,160	1,521	7,877	660	14,564
1994	91,437	42,524	13,450	3,942	3,986	3,065	1,356	8,309	685	14,120
1995	93,320	43,363	13,986	4,350	3,761	3,185	1,225	8,461	611	14,378
1996	94,948	43,649	14,986	3,959	3,741	3,206	1,134	8,872	638	14,763
1997	95,644	43,458	15,447	4,051	3,490	3,275	981	9,587	576	14,779
1998	97,835	43,501	16,274	4,406	3,255	3,515	886	10,255	546	15,217

Principal types of unintentional-injury-related deaths, United States, 1999-2015

Year	Total	Motor vehicle	Falls	Poisoning	Choking ^b	Drowning ^c	Fire, flames, or smoke ^b	Mechanical suffocation	Firearms	All other
1999 ^a	97,860	42,401	13,162	12,186	3,885	3,529	3,348	1,818	624	16,907
2000	97,900	43,354	13,322	12,757	4,313	3,482	3,377	1,335	776	15,184
2001	101,537	43,788	15,019	14,078	4,185	3,281	3,309	1,370	802	15,705
2002	106,742	45,380	16,257	17,550	4,128	3,447	3,159	1,389	762	13,670
2003	109,277	44,757	17,229	19,457	4,272	3,306	3,369	1,309	730	14,850
2004	112,012	44,933	18,807	20,950	4,470	3,308	3,229	1,421	649	14,245
2005	117,809	45,343	19,656	23,617	4,386	3,582	3,197	1,514	789	15,725
2006	121,589	45,316	20,823	27,531	4,332	3,579	3,109	1,580	642	14,687
2007	123,706	43,945	22,631	29,846	4,344	3,443	3,286	1,653	613	14,558
2008	121,902	39,790	24,013	31,116	4,366	3,548	2,912	1,759	592	14,398
2009	118,046	36,216	24,792	31,758	4,370	3,517	2,756	1,569	554	13,088
2010	120,859	35,332	26,009	33,041	4,570	3,782	2,782	1,595	606	13,748
2011	126,438	35,303	27,483	36,280	4,708	3,556	2,746	1,534	591	14,237
2012	127,792	36,415	28,756	36,332	4,634	3,551	2,464	1,604	548	13,488
2013	130,557	35,369	30,208	38,851	4,864	3,391	2,760	1,737	505	12,872
2014	136,053	35,398	31,959	42,032	4,816	3,406	2,701	1,764	586	13,391
2015	146,571	37,757	33,381	47,478	5,051	3,602	2,846	1,863	489	14,304
Changes										
2006 to 2015	21%	-17%	60%	72%	17%	1%	-15%	18%	-24%	-3%
2014 to 2015	8%	7%	4%	13%	5%	6%	-2%	6%	-17%	7%

Source: National Center for Health Statistics and National Safety Council. See Technical Appendix for comparability.

^a Includes drowning in water transport incidents.

^b Fires, flames, or smoke includes burns by fire and deaths resulting from conflagration regardless of nature of injury. Choking is the inhalation of food or other object obstructing breathing.

^c Comparable data not available.

^d In 1948, a revision was made in the International Classification of Diseases. The first figures for 1948 are comparable with those for earlier years, the second with those for later years.

^e Data are not comparable to previous years shown due to classification changes in 1958 and 1968.

^f Excludes water transport drownings.

^g In 1999, a revision was made in the International Classification of Diseases. See the Technical Appendix for comparability.

STATE DATA

Unintentional-Injury-Related Deaths by State (cont.)



2014

KENTUCKY

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	2,622	59.4
1	Poisoning ^a	1,038	23.5
2	Motor vehicle	716	16.2
3	Falls	302	6.8
4	Choking ^b	86	1.9
5	Fire, flames or smoke	71	1.6

LOUISIANA

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
3	All unintentional injuries	2,344	50.4
1	Motor vehicle	804	17.3
2	Poisoning ^a	699	15.0
3	Falls	261	5.6
4	Drowning ^c	95	2.0
5	Choking ^b	79	1.7

MAINE

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	690	51.9
1	Poisoning ^a	204	15.3
2	Falls	165	12.4
3	Motor vehicle	143	10.8
4	Choking ^b	24	1.8
5	Fire, flames or smoke	21	1.6

MARYLAND

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
5	All unintentional injuries	1,074	28.0
1	Falls	572	9.6
2	Motor vehicle	475	7.9
3	Poisoning ^a	281	4.7
4	Choking ^b	65	1.1
5	Drowning ^c	57	1.0

MASSACHUSETTS

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
3	All unintentional injuries	2,692	39.9
1	Poisoning ^a	1,250	18.5
2	Falls	626	9.3
3	Motor vehicle	409	6.1
4	Choking ^b	104	1.5
5	Fire, flames or smoke	32	0.5

MICHIGAN

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
5	All unintentional injuries	4,422	44.6
1	Poisoning ^a	1,447	14.6
2	Falls	1,095	11.0
3	Motor vehicle	1,006	10.2
4	Choking ^b	163	1.6
5	Mechanical suffocation	111	1.1

MINNESOTA

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
3	All unintentional injuries	2,385	43.7
1	Falls	1,026	18.9
2	Poisoning ^a	490	9.0
3	Motor vehicle	432	7.9
4	Choking ^b	80	1.5
5	Drowning ^c	50	0.9

MISSISSIPPI

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	1,712	57.2
1	Motor vehicle	673	22.5
2	Poisoning ^a	330	11.0
3	Falls	243	8.1
4	Choking ^b	122	4.1
5	Fire, flames or smoke	66	2.2

MISSOURI

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	3,110	51.3
1	Poisoning ^a	959	15.8
2	Motor vehicle	798	13.2
3	Falls	701	11.6
4	Choking ^b	113	1.9
5	Mechanical suffocation	83	1.4

MONTANA

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	581	56.8
1	Motor vehicle	204	19.9
2	Falls	150	14.7
3	Poisoning ^a	90	8.8
4	Choking ^b	25	2.4
5	Natural heat or cold	15	1.5

NEBRASKA

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
5	All unintentional injuries	781	41.5
1	Motor vehicle	252	13.4
2	Falls	219	11.6
3	Poisoning ^a	113	6.0
4	Choking ^b	39	2.1
5	Drowning ^c	20	1.1

NEVADA

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	1,166	41.1
1	Poisoning ^a	475	16.7
2	Motor vehicle	316	11.1
3	Falls	201	7.1
4	Drowning ^c	34	1.2
5	Choking ^b	30	1.1

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
3	All unintentional injuries	716	54.0
1	Poisoning ^a	301	22.7
2	Falls	220	16.6
3	Motor vehicle	107	8.1
4	Choking ^b	23	1.7
5	Fire, flames or smoke	10	0.8

NEW JERSEY

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
5	All unintentional injuries	2,970	33.2
1	Poisoning ^a	1,192	13.3
2	Motor vehicle	574	6.4
3	Falls	512	5.7
4	Choking ^b	156	1.7
5	Fire, flames or smoke	61	0.7

NEW MEXICO

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
3	All unintentional injuries	1,534	73.6
1	Poisoning ^a	532	25.5
2	Motor vehicle	395	18.9
3	Falls	376	18.0
4	Choking ^b	38	1.8
5	Natural heat or cold	32	1.5

NEW YORK

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
5	All unintentional injuries	5,945	30.1
1	Poisoning ^a	2,098	10.6
2	Falls	1,548	7.8
3	Motor vehicle	1,147	5.8
4	Choking ^b	236	1.2
5	Fire, flames or smoke	137	0.7

NORTH CAROLINA

Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
5	All unintentional injuries	4,558	45.8
1	Motor vehicle	1,393	14.0
2	Poisoning ^a	1,229	12.4
3	Falls	1,085	10.9
4	Choking ^b	149	1.5
5	Fire, flames or smoke	121	1.2

NORTH DAKOTA

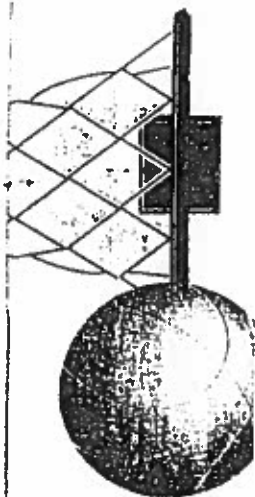
Rank	Cause	Deaths	Rate
4	All unintentional injuries	349	47.2
1	Motor vehicle	103	13.9
2	Falls	102	13.8
3	Poisoning ^a	48	6.5
4	Choking ^b	25	3.4
5	Mechanical suffocation	—	—
5	Natural heat or cold	—	—

See source and footnotes on page 177

OLDER AND UNWED

ore Americans over age 45 choose to live together.

Page 3A



MIO MILESTONES

Girls' basketball team wins 64 consecutive regular season games.

Page 1D

Windy and cloudy, low 65

More on weather, see Last Page

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ay, September 6, 1995

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THE BAY CITY TIMES

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24

Hidden weapons could result in Western 'justice'

By Judy Putnam
TIMES LANSING BUREAU

Proposed legislation that would allow a gun in just about every purse and pocket in the state likely would bring Old West-style "justice" to Michigan, Bay City's police chief said.

"With (concealed) firearms that immediately available, people would be drawing their weapons and having shoot-outs in the streets," said Chief Timothy Lochinski. "I've read articles where people say that it would deter crime, that bad guys would meet their match, but in some cases, people will become victims when they pull out their guns."

Lochinski's sentiments are echoed by other law enforcement groups that hope to shoot down bills liberalizing concealed weapons permits, which they say would endanger officers as well as the public.

Rep. Alan Cropsey, R-DeWitt, the main sponsor of the legislation, Tuesday asked the state's police and prosecutors to work with him on a compromise to allow more citizens to carry handguns.

The laws would dump local gun control boards and require that permits be issued to anyone who qualifies — those 21 or older who do not have a history of criminal or mental problems and who pass a handgun safety course — unless police show the applicant is a danger to others. As the laws stand today, a person wishing permission to carry a hidden weapon must go before a local gun board, made up of law enforcement officials, and explain why they need to do so.

Lochinski, who formerly served on the Bay County gun board, said a person must

See CONCEALED, 2A

CONCEALED guns bill opposed

From 1A

have a pretty good reason to be granted the right to carry a hidden weapon.

"People say they carry large sums of money," he said. "That's not good enough."

Permits are granted for security guards and for personal protection, as long as the person doesn't have a history of violence.

Liberalizing the permit laws would add up to 300,000 concealed weapons permits in Michigan, both sides agree. About 60,000 Michigan residents now have permits to carry concealed weapons, but it's been estimated that most of those permits have restrictions, allowing their use only to and from work, for example.

In Bay County, 206 permits were granted this year so far, and 334 were granted last year. The permits are valid for one to three years. The total of concealed weapons permits was not available today from the county clerk.

Cropsey's proposal would require the Secretary of State to issue the permit if the applicant met the qualifications.

The Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, the Michigan Sheriffs Association and the Michigan State Police oppose the laws.

Opposing the law enforcement groups are members of the National Rifle Association, the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, gun clubs and citizens up-

set that they've been denied permits.

Cropsey, who is chairing a Judiciary subcommittee on the issue, said he wants to work with police groups, but so far they haven't offered any solutions.

He offered to change his legislation so that instead of having applicants go to the Secretary of State's Office, they would apply at their local law enforcement agency. That way officers could screen the applicants for evidence — such as an arrest that isn't in a permanent record — the applicant should be denied.

But police groups say they like the system as it is now, where citizens have to prove a need for a concealed weapon.

Lochinski said a person with a gun in his pocket may have a false sense of security, and whether they've had a gun safety course or not, problems can arise.

"Things are a lot different on the practice range than they are in real life," he said. "The gun doesn't make you Superman. It just makes you a guy with a gun."

The House Judiciary and Civil Rights Committee is scheduled to take up the concealed weapons law Sept. 27. Cropsey said he has six of the nine needed votes and is working on getting the rest.

He said 26 other states have voted to liberalize their concealed weapons permits. "The trend seems to be going toward letting more honest, law-abiding citizens to carry weapons," Cropsey said.

— Times Writer Crystal Harmon contributed to this report.

2 of 2

(25)

Sheriff won't back proposal to pack

Walberg co-sponsors bill to make it easier to carry a concealed weapon

By ROGER A. FERGUSON
Daily Telegram Staff Writer

LENAA WEE — "There is a saying: 'An armed society is a polite society.' But Lenawee County Sheriff Richard Germond begs to differ.

Germond argues that an armed society would be more likely to turn a minor skirmish into murder.

"Someone just inside the law might go a little bit further (if they have a gun)," Germond said.

The sheriff's response comes on the heels of a bill introduced this week in the State House that seeks to loosen restrictions on concealed-weapon permits.

The bill — introduced by Rep. Alan Grosey, R-Dewitt, and co-sponsored by Rep. Tim Walberg, R-Tipton — would allow any person 21 and older to get within 24 hours a permit to carry a concealed handgun

if they had not been convicted of a felony in the last eight years and had not been judged mentally incompetent.

The law now requires that an applicant must state a reason, such as protection while carrying money, and obtain approval from a county licensing board made up of the prosecutor, sheriff and a Michigan State Police officer.

In Lenawee County, that board is made up of prosecutor Irving Shaw, chairman of the committee; county Undersheriff Meritt Mowrey, appointed by Germond to fill his spot; and Michigan State Police Lt. Gary Newell.

Grosey's bill would replace the county gun boards with a less restrictive system run by the state. A similar bill last year failed to get out of committee.

State Sen. Jim Berryman, D-Adrian, said Grosey's bill will not get the vote should it ever reach the Senate.

"I think people would apply and carry (a handgun) that normally wouldn't carry one," Berryman said. "Even the nicest of people lose their temper... and in a momentary loss of control, they would use one."

Many supporters of the bill are also supporters of limiting state control on the everyday lives of citizens, he said. The new law, though, promotes more big government, opponents said.

Walberg refutes that claim.

"Local government is very important but in the case of a constitutional right, neither local government or state government should be involved," he said. "We shouldn't have to have this bill passed. The second amendment gives us that right (to bear arms). (But) it has been taken away from us over the years."

Currently, Walberg — who has a concealed-weapon permit and has carried a handgun on a few occasions — said the right to bear arms in the second amendment is now arbitrarily being denied to citizens by their local gun boards.

"At the very least we should not be concerned about opening this up to law-abiding citizens," said Walberg.

According to Germond, the Lenawee County Gun Board issues about 1360 permits a year, mainly for hunting or target practice.

DAILY TELEGRAM - (CMI)

Oppose concealed weapons bills

by Chief Circuit Judge Michael Matuzak
34th Judicial Circuit of Michigan

As many of my neighbors, I grew up in a tradition of hunting, and with a profound respect for the firearms that allow us all to enjoy this great sport in Michigan's wilderness. At a very early age, my father taught me to shoot, and to be careful where I pointed my deer rifle.

I was no older than the boys in Jonesboro, Arkansas who this past week used rifles so much like my own to maim to kill their small classmates and teacher. It seems another age, when a young boy can learn to hunt with his father, to these days when children kill children.

I am particularly concerned with these latest shootings because we have seen the same here. In my courtroom, a fifteen-year-old boy, T.J. Tremble, was recently convicted of taking the lives of Peter and Ruth Stanley, our neighbors in Augres.

The parade of youth violence we now see in court is unprecedented. The childish fights and misbehavior I experienced growing up has evolved to this terrible point, where children amass weapons designed for sport to use for killing.

So I was disturbed to learn of the introduction of HB (House Bills) 5551 through 5559, proposed laws that would make it easier not to own weapons—but to *conceal* them—and to hide them from police and potential victims—all of us.

As a judge I well know that such legislation will only lengthen the parade of criminals young and old committing crimes with guns. And as a child who grew up in Michigan's North, I'm not fooled by the arguments that such reckless legislation is good for hunters—you'd better conceal yourself—not your gun—if you want to go deer hunting.

All of us are sick of this parade of young killers. And we ought to be angry that gun sellers, and their supporters use all of us who love the wilderness and know the value of hunting, to make their profits selling guns to kids and killers.

I hope you will join with me, and write to your legislators in Lansing (The Capitol, Lansing, MI 48909) to let them know that we must take steps to end these child killings—and must oppose these bills—HB 5551 through 5559.

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THE THURSDAY OAKLAND PRESS

1998 Michigan Press Association Newspaper of the Year

May 20 1999

Goreyca: Count us out if state eases concealed-gun permits

By KATHLEEN GRAY
of The Oakland Press

A more permissive concealed-weapon law is so offensive to Oakland County's prosecutor that he says he no longer would serve on a county permit board.

The Oakland County Sheriff's Department does not like the bill either.

"If the House bill does become law, then we will lobby to get off the gun board," Prosecutor David Goreyca said Wednesday. "If the citizens want this type of legisla-

tion, then let's appoint a citizens' gun control board."

By a 72-35 vote early Wednesday morning, the state House approved the legislation requiring gun boards to issue concealed-weapon permits to anyone who applies as long as they meet

certain criteria, including:

■ They are at least 21 years old and have completed a gun safety class.

■ They have no felony convictions.

"I don't want to be rubber-stamping (concealed-weapon permits) for people who haven't had adequate and thorough background checks. And I don't have the time, manpower or resources to conduct background checks to see if individuals meet the requirements."



— David Goreyca
Oakland County
prosecutor

PLEASE SEE CONCEAL/A-17

CONCEAL

FROM PAGE A-1

County prosecutor says he wants off gun permit board if rules change

■ They do not have two drunk-driving offenses.

■ They have no history of mental illness.

"I don't want to be rubber stamping permits for people who haven't had adequate and thorough background checks," said Goryca. "And I don't have the time, manpower or resources to conduct background checks to see if individuals meet the requirements."

Under current law, an applicant for a permit must demonstrate the need to get one to the county gun board, which is composed of representatives of the county prosecutor and sheriff's department and the Michigan State Police. About 21,000 people are authorized to carry weapons now, but legislators predict that number will increase to at least 200,000 statewide if the bill becomes law.

"I've got a lieutenant who spends 16 to 24 hours a month now processing the applications," said Oakland County Sheriff's Capt. Mike McCabe. "It's a burden right now. Can you imagine if we get 200,000 applying for these? A large portion of those will be in Oakland County. If we're just going to be a rubber stamp, what is that going to accomplish?"

The state Senate is expected to debate a separate package of bills today that would scrap county gun boards and give the responsibility of issuing concealed weapon permits to the Secretary of State.

Li Boyd, a spokeswoman for

The vote

How Oakland County legislators voted:

■ YES: Mike Bishop, R-Rochester; Nancy Cassis, R- Novi; Robert Gosselin, R-Troy; Ruth Johnson, R-Holly; Mike Kowall, R-White Lake; John Pappageorge, R-Troy; Andrew Raczowski, R-Farmington Hills; and Marc Shulman, R-West Bloomfield.

■ NO: Patricia Godchaux, R-Birmingham; Gilda Jacobs, D-Huntington Woods; Hubert Price, D-Pontiac; Nancy Quarles, D-Southfield; and David Woodward, D-Madison Heights.

Secretary of State Candice Miller, said Miller supports the concept of the legislation but believes the administration of the program is better left at the local level.

But if the Legislature directed Miller to administer the program, Boyd said, the process would take place in Lansing.

"We want to keep customer service at a level that we've come to expect," she said. "So we would administer the program centrally."

The legislation was accelerated because many Republicans concluded that there was no uniformity in the permit process. Macomb County, for example, gave nearly half of the concealed weapons permits in the state last year. The remaining 82 counties used stricter guidelines.

"We're changing the whole state law because we have one county that is giving away CCWs like water," said state Rep. Patricia Godchaux, one of only three Republicans who voted against it.

"I think Oakland County has been pretty responsible about the whole thing," she said. "Every

county is different. There are different needs in different counties and a local board can be sensitive to that."

A poll taken in April by EPIC-MRA and commissioned by Handgun Control, a gun-control lobbying group, reported that 70 percent of respondents said a person applying for a permit should have to show a need to carry a gun. Fifty-three percent said they opposed the legislation; 31 percent favored relaxing the process and 16 percent were undecided.

Lawmakers tried to offer amendments prohibiting guns from being carried in schools and government offices. But those amendments failed and the bill merely allows bars, restaurants, sports arenas and stadiums, schools, churches and government offices to post signs prohibiting weapons from the facilities.

"We don't let people smoke in our schools when kids are there," said Godchaux of Birmingham. "I can't believe we're going to let them carry guns."

The bill's supporters invoked the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in arguing for the bill.

"This is a freedom that our state and federal constitutions guarantee," said the bill's sponsor, state Rep. Mike Green, R-Mayville. "Ladies and gentlemen, don't stifle our freedom."

And Rep. John Pappageorge cautioned that the legislation includes safeguards.

"Before you make any judgment, we've got 21 bills that need to be assimilated. You need to look into balances built into this thing," he said. "Once you do that, I don't believe people will be as alarmed as a few might be right now."

(The Associated Press contributed to this report).

December 7, 2003

CCW law looks like winner

Weapon carriers do little to alarm officials

By Ken Palmer
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

GENESEE COUNTY — Some people who checked out clean for a concealed weapon gun permit are committing crimes, sometimes with the guns they were licensed to carry.

But the number of violators has been so small — less than one-half of one percent — that even those who didn't like the law when it was passed are calling it successful.

Since Michigan's more permissive CCW (for Carrying Concealed Weapons) law took effect in July 2001, one county permit holder has gone to prison for cocaine delivery and felony firearm possession. One brandished a gun during a road-rage dispute and another was charged with domestic assault using a weapon, county officials said.

Several others have been arrested for drunken driving while carrying a firearm.

Still, said state police Lt. Diane Garrison, "My worst fears and scenarios have not played out." Garrison is commander of the Flint Township post.

"We have not had shoot-outs at intersections. I

Please see **CCW, A6**

CCW

Continued from A1

would have thought that some broad-range incidents would have turned into shootings. But all in all, it's gone pretty well."

Garrison said at traffic stops, most CCW holders are immediately telling troopers they are carrying a weapon, as the CCW law requires.

The controversial "shall-issue" law entitles any Michigan adult to a gun permit as long as he or she hasn't been convicted of a felony or certain misdemeanors and doesn't have a history of mental health problems. The permit allows them to carry the weapon anywhere except designated gun-free zones, such as schools and bars.

Local gun boards previously issued gun permits based on need. Under the "shall-issue" law, the Genesee County gun board doesn't even require applicants to appear before them unless the members have specific questions.

The board includes representatives from the state police, county prosecutor's office and sheriff's department.

Before it took effect, opponents of the law feared it would lead to excessive violence and rampant gun use.

Since July 1, 2001, eight licenses have been revoked and 20 have been suspended. In two of those suspensions, the license was reinstated.

The 28 revocations and sus-

Concealed weapon permits in Genesee County

Total applications received, as of mid November: 6,220

Denied: 74

Revocations: 8

Suspensions: 20

Reinstated after suspension: 2

Source: Genesee County clerk's office. Statistics are for applications and permits made under the "shall-issue" law that took effect July 1, 2001.

It's the law

Michigan's "shall-issue" concealed weapon law was changed by the Legislature, effective July 1, to loosen some provisions and streamline the application process. Some of the key changes:

- The permit fee rose to \$105 from \$85. But applicants now make only one payment instead of several smaller ones.
- Permits are now good for five years instead of three years.
- Gun boards can check medical records of an applicant during the mandatory background check.
- The list of misdemeanors making someone ineligible for a gun permit has been reduced to several specific drug and alcohol-related offenses. Previously any misdemeanor conviction made applicants ineligible for three years.
- Retired police officers are now exempt from some training requirements.
- Certain people who need to carry guns, such as security guards and private detectives, are allowed to carry in designated weapons-free zones while on duty.
- Permit holders can now carry a gun inside restaurants that sell more food than alcohol, and in the parking lots of weapons-free zones as long they remain inside their vehicle.
- The size of the permit has been reduced to the size of a driver's license to better fit in wallets.

pensions make up about four-tenths of 1 percent of the 6,240 CCW permits issued under the new law in Genesee County as of November.

The number of permits dropped sharply in the county in

few months after the new law took effect. He said he didn't get his permit until several months later, mostly because he had to wait for the required gun safety training course.

Leathley, who uses a handgun to hunt deer, said all of his deer-hunting buddies obtained CCW permits.

"Once you get it, it's a novelty — I'm going to carry it because I can," he said. "But I don't think I've carried mine in months other than for specific instances where I might be going to a place I know there may be problems."

Leathley said he hears no complaints about the new law except for some grumbling about the long wait.

It now takes about two months to get a CCW permit in Genesee County. But the wait is getting shorter because of streamlining at the state level, said Robert E. Coffman, who oversees the vital records division of the Genesee County clerk.

"We're getting fingerprint clearances quicker," he said. "The wait of two months is not going to be around anymore."

Coffman said gun board members have been pleasantly surprised that so few CCW holders are violating the law.

"I think that bodes well for the criminal background checks that we have to do," he said.

Statewide, about 80,500 permits had been issued under the new law through June 30, according to the state police Web site.

Authorities had revoked 107 permits, including 23 for felony

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(Page 32)

NRA Official Journal of the National Rifle Association

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RATES SINCE
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OF RIGHT-TO-
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COVER STORY

by GARY LANTZ

C

“What we anticipated didn’t happen, and I think we should breathe a sigh of relief.”

onvincing the anti-gun crowd that Right-to-Carry laws aren’t a stepping stone to Armageddon brings to mind that old cliché about talking to a brick wall. Yet recent news from the state of Michigan might be enough to cause a crack in that wall as statistics prove—yet again—that the predicted rash of shootouts failed to materialize.

Figures released in January show that during the six years since Michigan joined the American mainstream by offering citizens a shall-issue Right-to-Carry law, the number of firearm-related fatalities dropped—even though opponents predicted rampant mayhem.

More telling is the fact that criminal activity dwindled while the number of Michiganders legally licensed to carry a concealed handgun increased some six-fold.

Overall, the violent crime rate in Michigan during the years since passage of Right-to-Carry was significantly less than the rate during the six years prior to passage. At the same time, the number of firearm fatalities, including those stemming from suicide and accidents, also declined.

According to Michigan law enforcement officials, approximately one in 65 state citizens are now authorized to legally carry loaded

SUCCESS! firearms during their daily routine.

This adds up to some 155,000 Michiganders, a number far exceeding the 25,000 or so authorized to carry guns before the concealed-carry system was broadened in 2001.

"I think the general consensus out there from law enforcement is that things are not as bad as we expected it could be," said Woodhaven Police Chief Michael Martin, co-chair of the legislative committee for the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police. "What we anticipated didn't happen, and I think we should breathe a sigh of relief."

Opponents of Right-to-Carry predicted an outbreak of firearm violence, even though concealed-carry options are now the norm rather than the exception across much of America. Similar predictions of Wild West-style shootouts in a number of other Right-to-Carry states also never materialized, dating back to the uproar in Florida

“If you're in a bad situation and have to resort to calling 9-1-1, then it's probably too late.”

some 17 years before.

John Lott, visiting professor at the University of Maryland, has spent years researching violence in America. He said the crime-reduction trend following passage of the Michigan Right-to-Carry law should come as no surprise to anyone.

Lott said at least two-thirds of the studies he's seen indicate that Right-to-Carry laws reduce crime. The rest show very little effect on the status quo.

At the same time, no peer-reviewed study has ever indicated that crime actually increased following passage of a Right-to-Carry law enacted by state lawmakers, like the one signed by

Michigan Gov. John Engler in 2000.

Under Michigan's law, those seeking a concealed-carry permit must complete a strict training process and pay a fee. Generally, these tend to be the kind of people who don't break laws, Lott pointed out.

Lott added that nationally, the number of revoked permits continues to be very low. In Michigan, some 2,000 have been revoked or suspended since 2001, or just a little more than 1 percent of the number granted. In almost every case, revocations were the result of some sort of nonviolent legal issue.

Yet even though statistics point towards a safer Michigan rather than the catastrophically violent one anti-gun groups promised if Right-to-Carry passed, detractors still refuse to accept positive findings.

One official with the Michigan chapter of the Million Mom March actually said that despite the figures, she still believes that gun violence has grown, owing to what she feels is inadequate reporting. And, she adds, even if the statistics prove to be correct, there are still more guns in Michigan homes and on the street, in her opinion offering the potential for increased violence some day in the future.

However, advocates for the Michigan Right-to-Carry law believe the crime reports are both scientific and accurate, and also point out the number of lives saved by concealed firearms when permit holders faced violent criminal attacks. And, while a large percentage of Right-to-Carry licenses have been granted to citizens concerned for their personal safety, some, like 40-year-old Michelle Reurink, applied simply because she feels the U.S. Constitution provides her with that right.

Reurink remains a strict constitutionalist on Right-to-Carry issues. And, since she applied for a carry permit and passed the necessary requirements, Reurink has found that she feels safer due to the training, especially the sessions covering self-defense. She and others believe that the training process

provides a certain amount of psychological insurance as they go about their daily routines, building confidence and providing a deterrent that has eased a number of concerns.

"With due respect to the police, they simply can't be there to protect each of us," one Michigan permit holder pointed out. "If you're in a bad situation and have to resort to calling 9-1-1, then it's probably too late."

At present there are 40 Right-to-Carry states, with 36 now having "shall-issue" laws, or statutes requiring that carry permits be issued to those meeting uniform standards established by the state legislature. Others, including Alabama, Connecticut and Iowa, offer what the NRA terms a fairly administered "discretionary issue" system. Independent-minded Vermont allows concealed carry without a permit process. Alaska offers a permit for those wishing reciprocity with other states; otherwise, citizens there enjoy freedom to carry a concealed firearm under a no-permit-required law adopted in 2003.

Among the 10 states that still deny the right to carry, eight sometimes offer permits on a discretionary basis. The others—Illinois and Wisconsin—ban carry altogether, despite the fact that in recent years violent crime rates have been lower than at any time since 1976. National statistics reflect a 31-year low in criminal violence, while 23 states have passed Right-to-Carry laws since 1991 and the number of privately owned firearms has risen by some 70 percent.

Researchers believe that if holdout states had adopted concealed-carry, it's possible that they could have avoided annually as many as 1,570 murders, more than 4,000 rapes and some 60,000 aggravated assaults. The statisticians point out that when Right-to-Carry laws have been put in place, individual counties have experienced an 8.5 percent drop in murder rates, a 5 percent reduction in rapes as well as a 7 percent decline in aggravated assaults.

David Kopel, Second Amendment scholar and frequent *America's 1st Freedom* contributor, points out, "Whenever a state legislature first considers a concealed-carry bill, opponents typically warn of horrible consequences.

“ Researchers believe that if holdout states had adopted concealed carry, it's possible that they could have avoided annually as many as 1,570 murders, more than 4,000 rapes and some 60,000 aggravated assaults. ”

But then, within a year of passage, the issue usually drops off the news media's radar screen, while gun control advocates in the legislature conclude that the law wasn't so bad after all.”

A case in point would be Florida,

which, led by the efforts of former NRA President Marion Hammer, adopted Right-to-Carry in 1987, passing a law that became a model for the majority of states following suit. At the time the uproar over the proposed legislation reverberated coast to coast. A contingent of anti-gun organizations, prominent media personalities and lawmakers portended that the state would descend into a “Wild West” environment besieged by vigilante-style justice and shootouts on every street corner, reducing the Sunshine State to a modern-day version of old Dodge City.

In reality, Florida's murder rate actually decreased by 23 percent through 1992, while the number of murders was climbing nationally. Following 1992, the downward trend continued both in Florida and on a national basis.

The Florida Licensing Division director during the transition to Right-to-Carry was quick to point out, “Florida's concealed-carry law has been very successful. All major law enforcement groups supported the legislation. Now some of the opponents of the law admit that the program hasn't created the problems many of them predicted.”

By looking at the statistics it's easy to see that the right to carry a concealed firearm for self-defense has been, for a number of years now in the majority of our states, a law that's good for the good guys and not so good for the bad. At the same time, it shouldn't be overlooked that the right to self-defense is a fundamental right, one the U.S. Constitution, the constitutions of 44 states, common law and laws in all 50 states recognize.

Essentially, Right-to-Carry laws are a commonsense extension of a free society's most basic tenet—a reflection upon, and respect for, the basic right to live free of fear and to have a fighting chance. ☐

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